

The Stone House in Blandford
Petersburg, Virginia

HABS No. VA-96

HABS
VA
27-PET,
9-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Reduced Copies of Measured Drawings

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
Philip N. Stern, District Officer
21 Law Building
Fredericksburg, Virginia

HABS
VA.
27-PET

9-

THE STONE HOUSE IN BLANDFORD

Petersburg, Virginia

Owner:- Harwood H. Norris.

Date of Erection:- 1760 (approximate)

Architect:- Unknown.

Builder:- Unknown.

Present Condition:- In a very bad state of preservation. The building apparently extended onto the South originally, that end appearing chopped off.

Number of Stories:- One and a half with basement.

Materials of Construction:- Foundations:- Stone on North, East and West. Brick and stone on South.
Floors:- Wood.
Exterior walls:- Stone on East and West, stone and brick on North, frame on South.
Interior walls:- Frame, plastered throughout.
Roof:- Tin.
Exterior cornice:- Stone.

The north, east and west walls are of native stone, cut stone being used for the cornice, quoins, and around doors and windows. The cut stone is of a light gray buff and very crumbly. Due to its texture and color and as there is no stone of this type found anywhere in this area, it gives strong indications of being Portland stone. These walls were undoubtedly stuccoed or plastered in some way. It is impossible to tell from the present condition just what this was like. The south wall is frame with brick and stone foundations laid up in a very haphazard fashion. The other walls have stone foundations. No evidence has been found to show the extent of the building to the south. A number of fragments of stone steps are in evidence around the place, as well as a much larger fragment indicating it to be a part of a landing. These give no indication of there having been an iron railing.

The west room in the cellar has a wood floor almost entirely rotted away. The walls were formerly plastered and the ceiling partially plastered. The east cellar room has a dirt floor and no plaster. The owner says there was a well located at the south end of this room approximately in the center. No trace of this is now in evidence. The cellar steps are not original and very dilapidated. There is a 4" x 11" sill on the brick partition between the two rooms. The floor joists above are 4" x 8" partially hewn, spaced from 18" to 25" on centers.

The chair rail, base and wood unpaneled dado in the hall and two rooms on the first floor are the same. The trim around all doors and windows is the same except the windows in the frame end which is of a later date. Both exterior doors are modern and all original locks have been removed throughout. Both fireplaces have been bricked up and stoves take their place.

The second floor is plastered throughout with the exception of a modern $\frac{3}{4}$ " board partition closing off the east end of the hall. The fireplace here also has been closed and is boarded over. There is a plain base-board $4\frac{1}{2}$ " high and a $6\frac{3}{4}$ " chair rail with $\frac{1}{2}$ " bead at top and bottom. The height of the chair rail is 3'-0". The dormers are are boarded flush with the plaster to the height of the chair rail. The doors to the closets under the roof are also 3'-0" high and have original hinges as have also the lids to the window boxes. Where plaster

has fallen hand split lathe is exposed. The rafters are hewn 4" x 6"'s spaced approximately 2'-0" on centers.

Typical brick sizes taken from the north gable end are as follows: $8\frac{1}{4}" \times 3\frac{1}{2}" \times 2\frac{1}{2}"$

$8" \times 2\text{-}7/8" \times 2\frac{3}{4}"$

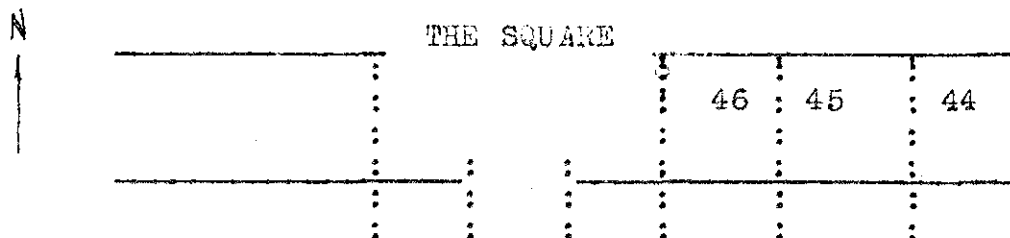
$8\text{-}3/8" \times 3\frac{1}{4}" \times 2\frac{1}{2}"$

Joints approximately $\frac{1}{2}"$

HISTORICAL DATA

The earliest record of the property which can be found is in the Petersburg Court House.

Deed Book no. 1, pp 105, 106, 107. Charles Duncan owned 85 acres between Blandford Church (commonly called the Brick Church) and the upper end of Blandford. In 1782 at the house of James Turnbull deceased of Petersburg, the 85 acres having been divided into lots, the lots were disposed of by a lottery to the adventurers assembled. William Robertson won 44 and 46, John Long won 45. The following is part of the plat showing these lots:



Lot No. 46 is the lot on which the Stone House is located.

Deed Book No. 1, pp 155-January 4, 1786. William Robertson sold lot No. 46 to John Shore.

Deed Book No. 4, p 42-June 4, 1811. Benjamin Boisseau bought lots No. 44, 45, 46 from Robert Russell.

Deed Book No. 6, p 45-September 7, 1818. Benjamin Boisseau and Elizabeth his wife sold lots No. 44, 45, 46 to Ruben Stevens for \$1,730.00 paid in hand.

Deed Book No. 7, p 190-January 1, 1824. Stevens did not pay up debt and lots sold at auction to William Wells and William Hawthorne.

Deed Book No. 8, p 315--March 13, 1830. Henry Lowndes bought lots No. 44, 45, 46 from William Wells and William Hawthorne.

The property now belongs to Harwood H. Morris who says his father bought the property over seventy years ago, he thinks from the Lowndes. The Lowndes had a great deal of property adjacent to this on which they operated a large pottery works.

This is the extent to which the records have been found as prior to 1784 the property was in Prince George County and most of the records of that county have been destroyed.

From the plat it will be noted that lot No. 46 faces on (The Square). The Blandford Court House stood in the center of this square but has long since disappeared. Locally "The Stone House" is known as "The Jail" and "The Clerk's Office" but no foundations can be found for either of these titles. It is almost certain it was never a jail. It is thought both of these designations mythical, having grown up from the fact that it is built of stone and for the reason of its proximity to the old court house.